

## New kid in town by Pnutbladdr

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**Language:** English

**Characters:** Eleven | Jane Hopper, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Joyce Byers

**Relationships:** Jim "Chief" Hopper/Original Female Character(s), Jim "Chief" Hopper/Reader, Jim "Chief" Hopper/You

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**Summary:**

You're a recent college graduate who ends up tutoring Eleven, and developing a crush on Hopper

# 1. Meet the Hoppers

## Author's Note:

This is my first fic on Ao3! I binged S3 of stranger things and got inspired, more chapters to come.

Title inspired by the Eagles song that was stuck in my head as I wrote this.

M for swearing, alcohol and mild violence in later chapters

You were the only customer in Melvald's that day, picking up some essentials for your new apartment. Well, you seemed to be the only paying customer. You deduced from the only other car in the parking lot that the Chief of Police was the man deep in conversation with the sole employee. He seemed stressed, so you gave the two of them a wide berth and went on shopping for kitchen appliances.

You were fresh out of college having studied maths and physics, but unlike your classmates who were now in tech jobs in the city, you decided to move out to the small town of Hawkins. One of the main reasons you chose Hawkins was to have the experience of living alone – no more college dorms, no more fighting for bathrooms in the early morning with your sisters, just sweet independence.

After two laps of the store, you brought your items up to the till, and smiled at the woman behind the counter who was patiently listening to the Chief rant about –as it turns out – his kid.

"I'm worried Joyce, she's struggling in some of her classes and God knows I'm no academic." He huffs, pinching the bridge of his nose. Joyce scans your items with an apologetic smile and replied, "I thought Mike and the boys were going to help her catch up? They're all pretty into science and stuff."

Your ears prick up at the mention of science, wondering if a job opportunity was about to fall into your lap. The large man gave a derisive snort,

"Yeah Mike came over and it went terribly. He's no good at

explaining anything, and that's coming from me! El got really frustrated and ending up slamming her door in his face, which I've wanted to do once or twice to the kid myself."

"Well keep an eye out in the paper Hop maybe you can find a tutor that way" offered Joyce before turning to you "Sorry for the wait, that'll be \$65.72"

Joyce handed you your bags and took your credit card to swipe it when you spoke up,

"I don't mean to be nosy, but I could help tutor in maths or science if that's what you need. I've just graduated from Indiana Tech, and I have some teaching experience."

Up until now, the police officer had ignored you, solely focused on his friend Joyce. He turned to face you properly and stood to his full height. Wow! He was big. He had been slouching to talk closely to Joyce, but now he stood well over six feet. He was broad, with a furrowed brow, thick moustache above his lip and strong arms crossed his chest. Sizing you up with piercing blue eyes, you suddenly felt very small and your confidence faltered,

"My name's [Y/N], I-I don't know if you guys would know Camp Know Where but it's a science camp I work at, so I'm no stranger to teaching teenagers."

Joyce's face lit up, "My son's friend just came back from Camp Know Where and he loved it! Hopper, that's where Dustin was this summer making that crazy radio."

You giggled, remembering a sweet kid with no front teeth obsessing over his long wave radio project. Hopper spoke hesitantly

"Sounds great but eh, my daughter El, she... she's not the most social, and she missed a lot a lot of school in the past so it'd be asking a lot..." he trailed off.

"Honestly that's no problem, I've worked with kids with behavioural and social problems before, but to put you at ease how about we do a trial session where we can see if El and I are a good match?"

"Yeah... yeah that sounds like a great idea – Joyce hand me some

paper would'ya?" he said, fishing a pen from his pocket, and writing his name and number on an old receipt she found behind the cash register. You scanned it, and said "Well Jim I'll be in touch!"

You waved goodbye to them both best you could with an armful of bags and headed out to your car.

A few hours later, standing in your half furnished apartment, you picked up the phone and rang the number Hopper gave you, twirling the phone cord in your fingers as it rang. A gruff voice answered "Hullo?"

"Hi Jim it's [Y/N], from Melvald's – just calling to see whether you were still interested in a tutor for El?"

You chatted briefly, asking him to make sure El brought her textbooks and pen and paper, while you took down his address. With a time set for that Friday after school, you hung up the phone with slight butterflies in your stomach. Just nerves about meeting a new student, you told yourself, and got on with more unpacking.

Friday came and you were extremely glad you left your house early, because Hopper's place was pretty far from the centre of town. The cabin at first glance looked almost abandoned, but upon closer inspection, you see a bike propped up under the kitchen window and heavy boots on the porch. You knocked on the door and heard Hopper call for El to answer it. A few seconds later girl of about 14 pulled open the door, looking small in an oversized flannel shirt, and greeted you plainly,

"[Y/N]?" she asked

"Yep that's me! May I come in?" you asked, smiling at her.

She wordlessly opened the door fully and you stepped in. The interior was cosy, with mismatched furniture and blankets on every surface. You loved this kind of style - modern 80s interior designs made you want to barf half the time. It had no personality, not like this place. You turned and saw Hopper in the kitchen. You almost didn't recognise him out of uniform – he was in light wash jeans, a grey Henley and a flannel shirt not unlike what El was wearing. You suddenly felt the same butterflies you had on the phone, and realised maybe they were not teaching nerves. You couldn't deny there was

something about older men that attracted you, especially rough and ready types like Hopper seemed to be. But you weren't going to entertain those thoughts today, and you tried to focus on teaching.

"I've just made some coffee, would you like some?" he offered, as you put down your bag and took off your coat,

"I'd love some, with milk and sugar too if you have it." He nodded, searching through the cupboards

"Here, sit yourself down – you too El!" he said pointing to the two chairs at the small square kitchen table. You sat beside El who was fidgeting with her textbook and got out your supplies. Hopper placed the coffee in front of you and said "I'll leave you two alone; I'll be working on paperwork in my room if you need me," he ruffled El's hair with his large hand before leaving and told her to "be good!" to which she gave a shy smile. You couldn't help but melt a little bit – how was this the same intimidating figure who stared you down at Melvald's?

The hour went by quickly. You went through some chapters of El's textbook and asked her what did and didn't make sense. She had some trouble expressing what she didn't know, but once you explained things with drawings and diagrams, she brightened up and became more inquisitive. El had a fair few gaps in her knowledge but you could tell she was incredibly bright, and just needed things explained differently to how it was taught in her science class. You started with algebra, and explained how equations were just like little puzzles to solve for unknown values – you were so engrossed you didn't even hear Hopper come out of his room until he opened the fridge directly behind you, making you jump.

"Didn't mean to scare you! I didn't realise algebra could be so fascinating" he said, looking over his daughter's shoulder at the pile of books and notes.

"It is if you're a big nerd like me," you replied, shooting El a wink, who giggled in response.

"El will you clear the table while I show [Y/N] out?" she rolled her eyes but stood up and started tidying away her things while Hopper walked you out onto the porch. You turned around to find him rifling

through his wallet

“So what do I owe you? You didn’t mention a price...” you pushed the wallet away gently and smiled at him,

“Don’t worry, first one is free. Today was a test to see if she’s even comfortable with me, so if all goes well you can give me \$15 next time.” He seemed bemused, but put away his wallet without complaint,

“Well I uh... I’ll be in touch then [Y/N].... safe home”

You gave him a wave before turning out the driveway onto the bumpy back roads. You sang loudly along to the radio and entered your apartment with a spring in your step. Getting through to a new student always put you in a good mood.

Only a few hours later your dinner prep was interrupted by the phone ringing. You shouldn’t have been surprised that it was Hopper; he was basically the only person in town with your number.

“Hey [Y/N] it’s Jim, I mean Chief Hopper... christ it’s El’s Dad!” you stifled a giggle at his clumsy introduction

“I believe I remember you Jim, how’s it going?”

“I don’t know what you did, but El has really taken to you. I don’t think she’s shut up about you since you left!” a huge smile spread across your face hearing this “She says you’re waaaay smarter than all the boys, and I’m inclined to agree with her,” he continued

“I like the way she thinks!” you laughed “She’s a smart kid Jim, she just needs a little extra support. Though I don’t know how much she’ll like me once we get onto trigonometry” a husky chuckle came through the phone that made your stomach somersault,

“Well I don’t know about that either, but we’ll have to wait and see.”  
“We will... so same time next week?”

“Yeah, yeah that should be good... but before you hang up,” his voice now a bit quieter and sincere

“I wanted to tell you how much I appreciated the way you interacted with El today. You really made her comfort a priority, made an effort to find what suits her and well... it means a lot.” This sudden earnest

monologue left you speechless for a second

“Oh gosh... well, thank you so much, and I’m delighted to hear she was happy with how today went.”

“That makes two of us [Y/N], I guess we’ll see you next week.” he said,

“That you will. Have a good weekend Jim.”

You hung up the phone and leaned against the counter. Your heart was pounding in your chest, and you could feel heat radiating off your flushed cheeks. Shit! You thought... you were falling for Hopper and you were falling hard.

## 2. Coffee for two

### Summary for the Chapter:

You get a chance to chat to Hopper in his cabin when El is late to her lesson

A few weeks passed and El was making steady progress. You two were starting to get into a rhythm and you could already see her opening up and becoming more confident. The only downside to these Friday afternoons was that Hopper always made himself scarce. He'd often be on the phone, or doing paperwork, but you wished you had more interaction with him than just rushed hellos and goodbyes. For purely selfish reasons you wanted to spend more time with him.

Well your wish was granted one week, when you pulled up to the cabin and it was Hopper who answered the door.

"Hey [y/n] ... Come on in, I'm afraid it's just you and me right now" he said, ushering you in after peering outside

"El isn't back from school yet... Dunno what's keeping her, probably \*MIKE\*" he muttered, "doesn't that boy respect El has a life outside him?"

"I take it you're not a fan of her boyfriend?" you grinned, accepting a hot mug of coffee from him

"You can say that again! They are always... ALWAYS glued together, it's not normal" he grumbled, worrying his hand through his sandy blonde hair "the constant kissing and phonecalls..."

"Oh and I'm sure you were an absolute angel growing up!" you teased "Definitely no girls and no trouble"

He gave a chuckle, gesturing with his cup of coffee "You got me there! My poor mother put up with a lot of shit with me growing up"

"Isn't it a shame teenagers don't come with instruction manuals?" you sighed "It'd sure make my life a hell of a lot easier!"

"You must be a saint if you willingly teach teenagers" Hopper said with a grin, sitting at the small table you usually shared with El. You took the seat opposite him, and retorted "or a huge masochist" which made him laugh, a sound you could listen to all day.

"At least I get paid to deal with teenagers, you decided to have one in



your house, so in my eyes that makes you the saint!"

"I'm no saint," he replied shaking his head, self deprecating as ever "just muddling through trying to figure out this whole parenting thing."

"14 years experience though, that's a pretty good track record" you offered

"What? Oh! No, no El is adopted; she's only been my daughter for a few years now" he clarified

"Oh woah, Congratulations, that's really amazing! I don't know many men whose first stab at parenthood would be adopting an older kid!"

His lips tightened, and you got the feeling you'd hit a sore subject, but he continued

"Actually El isn't my first child. I had a little girl - Sara - who passed away a few years ago from cancer" he said, eyes focusing on the table "Jim I'm so sorry..." you found yourself instinctively reaching out to hold his hand, and to your surprise he didn't move away. His hand was warm, dry and calloused, and your hand was dwarfed by his. With a sad smile he said

"Hey, how could you have known?"

"I'm usually on your end of the conversation," you said, a look of surprise on his face

"My Mom died very suddenly of cancer when I was younger, so every time I met someone new, or joined a new club, I'd have to deal with people finding out and being awkward, or worse, overly sympathetic."

Hopper gave your hand a squeeze and you locked eyes

"Sorry to hear that [y/n....]" absent-mindedly rubbing his thumb over your hand, "What a pair we make eh? "

The air in the cabin was thick with anticipation, and time seemed to stop altogether. You'd never been this close to Hopper. Your eyes traced over his jaw, the stubble that peppered his cheeks. He smelled of smoke and coffee and it was intoxicating. And this could have been your imagination, but you could have sworn he was staring at

your lips...

An almighty clatter outside yanked you from your dreamy state and you both jumped back from each other as if you'd been electrocuted. Hopper went out to the porch to see what the commotion was, and from the kitchen window you saw a gaggle of kids who had all dropped their bikes in a heap in the yard. You took a swig of your coffee to ground yourself and opened up your notebook while Hopper yelled for el to get inside quickly. A tough guy with a heart of gold... As if you needed a new reason to swoon over him.

Once El sat down, it was back to business. You knew she had a test coming up and so you dove back into her algebra textbook with her, and got into simultaneous equations for the next hour.

Ever the gentleman, Hopper walked you out to the porch once your lesson was over, commenting

"I gotta say you're a total natural when it comes to teaching [y/n] , some of the stuff you were talking about even got my interest!" he handed you your cash and feeling cheeky you replied,

"Well you're more than welcome to become my student Mr. Hopper but I charge extra for adults," his cheeks turned an impressive shade of pink and he grumbled something about teaching an old dog new tricks before clearing his throat and saying goodbye.

Walking back to your car, you brought your hand to your lips, and pressed them against where Hopper had run his thumb over your skin. Was he just being nice in a shared moment of vulnerability? Or could he possibly share in your feelings? You drove home, lost in thoughts of smoky cabins and hot coffees.

### 3. The Police

#### Summary for the Chapter:

El gets her test back, and Hopper gives you a ride home

#### Notes for the Chapter:

I don't know shit about American cars so our protagonist drives a manual/stick shift/5speed

also I haven't had to format fiction in a very long time, if ever, so bear with me while i wrestle with indents and line breaks

Through word of mouth (aka Joyce Byers telling every parent and customer who would listen), your tutoring business was starting to grow, and you finally had enough money to get your gearbox checked out in your car. It had been making some worrying noises so that's why, on a crisp Indiana afternoon, you were approaching the Hopper's residence on foot.

Before you had a second to catch your breath on the porch, the door swung open, and there stood Hopper in his khaki police uniform.

"Saw you walking up the drive, come on in," you dropped your coat and hat on the back of the couch and couldn't suppress a grin when you saw your coffee ready and waiting for you on the table. Hopper beckoned you to the kitchen area with a finger to his lips. You tip-toed over and leaned in to hear him whisper,

"El went straight to her room after school and hasn't come out... I'm worried the test went badly"

Your heart sank, it was always hard when a student didn't do as well as they'd hoped.

"It'll be OK, we can take it easy today. I mean it's only one test in her whole life."

El must've heard your murmurings because just then her voice came from behind a door to your left.

"Is that you [y/n]?"

Sharing a tense glance with Hopper you called back

"Hey El! Yeah I just got here,"

A small brown haired blur burst from her room, throwing her arms around you and knocking you into Hopper, who caught you against his chest.

"I got a B! I got a B PLUS! 88! 88!" she announced, bouncing up and down before thrusting the test into your face. You breathlessly hugged her back before stepping back and taking the test from her.

"El that's amazing! I'm so proud, are you happy with the result?" she nodded with a wide smile on her face.

"You rascal! You had me so worried it went badly!" said Hopper in mock anger, scooping her up and twirling her around. He placed her down and kissed the top of her head saying "You did great sweetheart good job"

"Can I go to Mike's now?" she asked him with large doe eyes

"No kiddo you still have a lesson with [y/n]" he replied, "you can see Mike afterwards like we discussed" she gave a pout and looked to you

"I don't make the rules El! But we won't do anything crazy, we'll just go over the questions you got wrong." you put your arm around her shoulders and looked to Hopper with a scheming look "and maybe if we finish early we can gang up on your dad to let you go to Mike's then.

Hopper gave a deep chesty groan, pinching the bridge of his nose,

"You ladies will be the death of me... Fine! If and that's IF you finish all the questions early then you can go to Mike's" he conceded.

El gave you a high five and quickly called Mike on the radio to let him know. You smiled at Hopper saying, "I'll let you know when we're finished Jim."

Over the 35 minutes it took you to go over El's test with her, the sky darkened and fat raindrops clattered on the roof of the cabin. You'd have to use today's cash from Hopper for a cab home by the looks of things. Just before 3.40pm, a knock came on the door and El shot up to get it. A gangly boy with dark hair and a raincoat was standing on the porch - the infamous Mike. Seeing you at the table he gave an awkward wave, which withered when Hopper appeared from his back room.

"And where are you two going in this weather?" he asked darkly, putting on the scary Dad act.

"Uhm we were gonna go to the movies, my sister is in the car outside and she'd pick us up later too" he croaked. El had already put on her coat and grabbed her bag and was halfway out the door when Hopper yelled after her "Be home by 9! Or you'll be cleaning the cabin with me all weekend!" she nodded and ran out to the car hand in hand with Mike.

Hopper awkwardly put his hands in his pockets and walked over to you packing up your bag.

"So, do you need a ride home? Didn't see your car out there" he asked

"Oh you don't have to do that," you said "just give me the number for a cab company and I'll be out of your hair."

"In the time it'd take a cab to get out here I'd be able to drop you off," he said, slinging on his jacket "come on, I insist."

"How can I argue with that!" you shrugged, and followed him out to the truck. You clambered into the passenger seat and watched him expertly reverse out, his arm behind the headrest of your seat. You fought the urge to stare; you always thought it was so sexy when men reversed like that.

"So where to [y/n]?" he asked at the first junction. You gave him your address and he turned left with a nod. "Pretty far away for a walk in the rain," he chuckled "What's wrong with your car?"

"Now don't judge," you started "but I wrecked the gearbox getting used to these roads, and it's taking a while in the garage because it's not an automatic transmission." You finished with a sigh.

Hopper's eyebrows arched in surprise, "Definitely not judging, in fact I'm impressed you drive stick, clearly smart woman." Pride swelled in your chest; you liked the idea of impressing Hopper.

"I didn't go to college just to show off my pretty face." You grinned, switching on the radio just as a song was starting. "Hey, The Police! I didn't know you were in a band Jim?" he groaned at your terrible joke

"Ha ha, never heard that one before." he said deadpan, "Don't tell me you're a Sting fangirl?" he said with a sideways glance.

"Nah he's way too pretty if you know what I mean? I'm more of a Kurt Russel or Harrison Ford kinda gal – a manly man" you answered honestly, to which Hopper said simply "I getcha" and proceeded to hum along to the radio.

*"...Inside her, there's longing, This girl's an open page. Book marking, she's so close now, This girl is half his age..."*

Now that you were listening to the lyrics, your face grew hot and you made a point of looking at your shoes. But your eyes kept being dragged back to his hands on the wheel, his legs as he accelerated and braked. With thighs like that he must've done wrestling or football in the past. He carried a bit more dad weight around the middle now but it didn't make him any less attractive. In fact, you couldn't stop thinking about that physique. Tearing your eyes away you fiddled with the zip on your coat to distract yourself.

*"... Temptation, frustration, So bad it makes him cry. Wet bus stop, she's waiting, His car is warm and dry..."*

Was this song reading you mind? You had entirely forgotten how to

act normal. It's a just a song dammit, don't make it weird! Your thoughts were interrupted by Hopper tapping your leg and asking which turn to take and you snapped back to reality.

"It's just up here to the right, with the red door." You replied, mouth dry and stomach flipping. He pulled up as closely as possible and turned off the ignition. Neither of you moved for a beat, the silence making you incredibly aware of your heart beating hard in your chest.

"Thanks so much for the ride Jim, I really appreciate it." You said politely, taking off your seatbelt.

"Don't mention it, really. Hell I should be thanking you!" he said, which made you turn to him, slightly bemused.

"Thank me for what?" you asked.

"You've gone above and beyond with El," he said, leaning against the steering wheel "I never would've been able to help her with that stuff. I wanna do something to thank you."

Your pulse was now thundering in your ears, and you must have looked taken aback because he spluttered,

"Nothing fancy or crazy or anything, just... maybe thought we could grab a drink?" he offered, his blue eyes meeting yours.

Trying not to sound too eager you replied, "It has been a while since I've gone to a bar... sure why not!" He gave a broad smile and you were amazed you didn't melt into a puddle there and then in his passenger seat.

"Awesome, there's a bar not far from here I think you'll like," he said as he proceeded to write down the bar and street name on a parking ticket. "Tomorrow night?"

"Absolutely, can't wait." You said breathlessly, taking the paper from him and getting out of the car. He stayed with the engine idling until you'd unlocked your door and he called out the window,

"I'll request they play the Police!" before his tyres kicked up gravel

and he was off.

You collapsed on the couch with a dopey smile on your face. Holy shit was this a date? Surely not, he was just grateful that you were helping his kid in math class. But then why invite you to a bar? Most parents just stick to soaps and a box of chocolates. You'd find out tomorrow night.



## 4. The Crossroads

### Summary for the Chapter:

your night out with Hopper doesn't go as planned

Some swearing and mild violence

### Notes for the Chapter:

Short intermediary chapter while I figure out how to give this the sweet ending I want

Just as Hopper said, the Crossroads bar was only a 10 minute walk from your place. It had a bit of a grungey dive bar feel, which was just your style. *How did he know?* You walked in nervously, and saw him immediately, chatting to the barman animatedly with a beer in hand. You'd think you'd be used to your stomach doing front flips every time you saw him, but sitting on that barstool laughing and smoking a cigarette, you felt as if all your joints were replaced with jelly. He saw you and beckoned you over with a smile you never tired of seeing. You got to the bar and Hopper introduced you to the barman

"Hey [Y/N]! You found the place ok?" you nodded "this is Scotty, used to work in the force with me, and for every time I keep his dirty little secrets he gives me a free beer." Scotty hit Hopper with a wet rag and turned his attention to you.

"And I constantly wonder why I haven't banned him yet. So what will it be gorgeous?" he asked.

"Moscow Mule when you're ready Scotty, thanks." You replied with a smile.

"If I knew we were going straight into spirits I would have ordered differently" chuckled Hopper, eyes sparkling.

"You have time to catch up," you teased. You felt much more natural here in the bar. He wasn't the Chief of Police, or a father looking for a tutor. You were you, and he was Jim. Scotty

placed the drink in front of you and before you could even open your wallet Jim had paid.

“Tonight is my treat... Am I going to have to ID you for that missy?” he purred, making you feel very hot and bothered. You took a sip of liquid courage and replied,

“I’ll have you know I haven’t been ID’ed since I was eighteen- Twenty one!” you giggled.

“You can’t fool me [Y/N], I can tell you were a wild one.” He smirked around the lip of his beer, finishing the last few dregs and signalling Scotty for another.

“I believe it takes one to know one Jim.” You countered, pursing your lips around the straw in your drink. His eyes widened and he stood, towering at least a foot above you.

“Few rounds of pool?” he asked, holding out his hand to help you up.

“Sure!” you accepted, as he pulled you up effortlessly, “I haven’t really played but it’s all angles... and that I know.”

You won a round each, after he taught you how to properly hold the cue. You bent over the pool table, and he leaned over you, his broad chest pressed against your back. His lips at your ear and his left hand over yours, correcting your grip. Feeling his fingers against yours was so intimate it made you want to moan out loud. Heat pooled in your abdomen and it took all your self-restraint not to push your ass against him. After the second round, his fifth beer, and your third vodka he stood and pointed a finger at you in mock accusation

“You’re definitely hustling me aren’t you sweetheart?” he said, putting his bottle down on the table beside you.

“You’ll never know” you teased, racking up the last of the balls. “One more for a tie-breaker?”

“Sure thing, after I return from the john... be right back.” Shooting a wink at you before heading off to the back of the bar. You racked up the last of the balls and applied chalk to your cue when

someone approached you. Assuming it was Hopper you turned with a smile, that quickly dissolved. A man who you'd seen at the bar was now uncomfortably close to you, his fetid breath making your nose wrinkle.

"What's a hot piece of ass like you doing here with fat Rambo?" he wheezed. You took a step back to get away from him.

"Having fun... minding my own business..." glancing at the bar to catch Scotty's attention.

"Come have fun with me instead sweetcheeks" he slurred, trying to place his hand on your waist. You spat in his face, hissing "get the fuck away from me."

His hand connected with your cheek in a slap that took your breath away. Before you could react, Hopper had pulled him off you by the collar of his shirt and threw him against a nearby table.

"you get you damn hands OFF HER" he roared, breathing heavily with fists loosely clenched at his sides. Scotty took you by the wrist behind the bar to ice your cheek, and get away from the action.

"b-but Jim..." you mumbled

"He's got in under control. Between his size and his job people tend not to mess with him for long." Grumbled Scotty, wrapping ice in a cloth and placing it under your eye.

"Unless you want to spend the night in jail for harassing an officer and assaulting a woman, you better walk away now." Hopper threatened darkly.

"And what about soliciting Chief? Come on she's a bit young don't you think?" he gurgled. Hopper reared back as if to kick him but you screamed "JIM PLEASE!"

He swung around, eyes wide and afraid once he saw Scotty tending to you. He ran over, brushing your hair out of your eyes

"Are you ok?" he asked, his voice breaking.

“Please take me home Jim” you asked, stifling a sob. Scotty handed your bag and jacket to Hopper and he lead you out by the hand to walk you home.

## 5. How you like it

### Summary for the Chapter:

Jim takes you home after your less than successful night out

### Notes for the Chapter:

I low key forgot about this fic and then got embarrassed about how much time had passed, but I got a surge of inspiration from all your kind comments <3

So here we go! The end of the saga

Jim scooped up your bag and you both hurried out of the bar. Thankfully your place was within walking distance and you both trudged in silence for a few hundred yards until the sounds of the bar faded away. You took a deep shaky breath and tried to subtly wipe away a tear that escaped your eye, but it didn't escape Jim's attention.

"Oh god [Y/N] are you ok? C'mere" and before you could respond he had pulled you into a bone crushing bear hug. You let out a little dry sob and allowed yourself a moment to enjoy his embrace. He radiated heat, and you took a deep inhale of his shirt. He smelled amazing to be frank. He had clearly showered just before meeting you and smelled of soap and cologne, as well as his usual smoky tinge of cigarettes. You regained composure and pulled back to look at him, meeting his eyes

"Honestly Jim I'm alright, it's shock more than anything... I'm afraid it's not the first time I've been harassed by some creep and it's not going to be the last either," you both pulled back from the embrace and his face tightened

"I'm gonna kill him... who does he think he is!" He ranted, looking back over his shoulder in the direction of the bar, you tugged on his hand and brought his attention back to you.

“Leave it Jim, it’s.. It’s not fine but it’s over! And if anything I’m glad you were with me, I can’t imagine anyone I’d feel safer with,” oh god the drinks we’re making your tongue loose, you blushed and hoped he didn’t notice your face heating up.

He chuckled “You’re too sweet to me, I feel terrible though... You’re right of course, let’s not dwell on it and let’s get you home.”

Starting to walk again he pulled out a cigarette, placed it between his lips and went to offer you one

“You smoke?” he asked?

“Smoke what?” you replied cheekily, which elicited a sudden bark of a laugh from him

“I knew you were a wild one, I’ll keep that on record next time we confiscate some teens bags eh?” shooting you a wink that made your stomach flip.

“As if I’m meant to believe a man such as yourself, who smokes every day, that you’ve never even thought of trying a jazz cigarette? The electric lettuce?” you teased back

Once again he laughed, a sound you’d never get sick of.

“You college types can read me like a book... Believe it or not I was something of a rebel in my youth, so yes I’ve been to festivals and fucked around with what they bring”

“Oh I can believe it,” you smiled, catching his eye and once again a sweet tension settled between you two as you stared into his crinkled blue eyes. He dropped his gaze and stubbed out his cigarette before clearing his throat.

“Here we are, madame,” he announced - you hadn’t even noticed you were at your front door, your feet had been on autopilot. You unlocked the front door and invited him in casually

“Make yourself at home, I’ll be back in a sec,” you said, and went to go check the mirror in the bathroom. Your cheek was red and a little puffier than the other. You splashed cold water on your face and hoped it would go down before you had to tutor on Monday. Jim was still standing when you came out of the bathroom, either to awkward or gentlemanly to sit without your explicit permission, he took two large paces towards you and placed a hand gently on your cheek,

pulling your jaw ever so slightly up so he could inspect the damage, his brows furrowed

“I’m so so sorry [Y/N], god this is all my fault I’m such an idiot,” he huffs, leaning on the couch, then standing, then pacing - clearly agitated.

“Jim you couldn’t have predicted this! It’s fine honestly” you tried to reassure him

Shaking his head, to himself moreso than you, he rambled on, “No no no this is me being an idiot, I should have asked you for dinner! Nice date for a nice girl like you, but I.. I...” he faltered, locking eyes with you. Neither of you had admitted to wanting a date, you had both been dancing around the unspoken tension you thought you solely felt

“God what am I even thinking,” he collapsed into an armchair “you’re my daughter’s tutor, and I’m some dirty old man bringing you to skeezy bars.” He looked so deflated, this bear of a man suddenly collapsed in on himself. You padded over, leaning on the arm of the seat and tried to get him to meet your eyes,

“Jim.. you beautiful bastard, literally nothing you just said is true” His head snapped up, visible confusion on his face

“I feel... oh god... I wanted tonight to happen. And yes I am well aware of the... the age gap between us, but I really couldn’t give a shit about it when I feel the way I do around you. I really like spending time with you and I hope tonight hasn’t ruined that..” you trailed off nervously

“Really?” was all he said?

“Really,” you affirmed

A sweet boyish smile spread over his face “I’d like a second shot, if you’ll grant me one [Y/N]?”

With a giggle you responded “absolutely” and once again there was silence, tension, longing. Jim pulled you off the arm of the seat he was in into his lap, gazing into your eyes, before closing the minimal distance between you both into a kiss. Fireworks went off in your head and you melted into the kiss. It was heaven. The taste of his

lips, his bristly face, your every sense filled with Jim Hopper. You parted lips and he rested his forehead against yours, a dopey smile plastered on his face

"I have been dying to kiss you for weeks now" he rumbled

"Well hopefully this is first of many," you replied breathlessly. He stood, pulling you up gently with him

"I should head home" he said softly

"Actually... I... I'm still a bit shaken from tonight Jim and don't much fancy being alone, could you stay? I'd feel more at ease" you admitted, staring at your feet

His eyes widened in surprise but he nodded his head "Of course... whatever you need."

He hung his jacket up by the door and slipped off his shoes while you fetched him a comforter from the hall closet

"I hope you don't mind taking the couch," you said as you set up some cushions for him

"Not at all, I like to think I'm a gentleman after all," he replied with a kind smile that made you want to melt there and then, but you regained yourself and teased

"A gentleman with a fierce punch!" giving his bicep a squeeze, and a that devilish grin crossed his face, giving you a storm of butterflies

"Darlin' I'm anything and everything you want me to be," he purred. That bastard made your entire core heat up and you tried your best to look unaffected.

"I'll see you in the morning Jim.... Goodnight"

"Goodnight hon" he replied and placed a chaste kiss on your forehead.

It took you a few minutes to find sleep, your cheeks ached from smiling and the butterflies in your stomach didn't much feel like sleeping, but eventually you slept deeply and soundly.

You awoke to sunlight streaming onto your face, you hadn't pulled the blinds last night, and you also heard ambient noises from the kitchen. Throwing on an oversized shirt and some flannel bottoms you made your way out to the kitchen, and there was Jim at the kitchen table, hair mussed, with two cups of steaming coffee - just how you like it.